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ABSTRACT

This self-scoring questionnaire on attitudes related to smoking includes norms based upon the responses of 7,000 teenagers and a discussion of the meaning of eight subscores. The subscores are: (1) effect of smoking on health; (2) non-smoker's rights; (3) positive effects of smoking; (4) manufactured reasons for smoking; (5) reasons for starting; (6) are teenage smokers "bad?;" (7) feeling toward authority; and (8) can I control my future? The booklet begins with a list of questions which teenagers can answer about themselves on the basis of the questionnaire results. (Author/CTM)

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TEENAGE SELF-TEST

TM007 290

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Teenage self-test

cigarette smoking

Would you like to know:

—How *you believe* most people react to cigarette smokers?

—What effect *you think* cigarette smoking has on how other teenagers accept you?

—What *you really think* of teenagers who smoke cigarettes?

—How do *you think* smoking affects a person's feelings about himself or herself?

—To what extent *you want* to have control over what you make of your life?

—How *you feel* about adults having a say over what you do?

—How much you *know* about the effects of cigarettes on a person's health?

You can find the answers to these questions by first reading the instructions and then turning the page.

instructions

Read each statement carefully before giving your answer.

These are statements that some teenagers have made about cigarette smoking and cigarette smokers. Some of the statements are directly related to smoking; some are not as directly related. You may agree or disagree with these statements. After reading each statement, circle the number that most nearly shows how you feel about the statements.

For example: If you strongly agree with the statement, circle the number in the column labeled "STRONGLY AGREE." If you disagree, but not very strongly, circle the number in the column labeled "DISAGREE."

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	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE
A. Even though lung cancer and heart disease can be caused by other things, smoking cigarettes still makes a real difference.	5	4	3
B. Cigarette smoke smells bad.	5	4	3
C. People smoke cigarettes to help them think more clearly.	5	4	3
D. It's okay for teenagers to experiment with cigarettes if they quit before it becomes a habit.	5	4	3
E. Cigarette smoking can harm the health of teenagers.	5	4	3
F. Cigarette smokers should be kept apart from non-smokers in public places.	5	4	3
G. Smoking cigarettes can help you enjoy life more.	5	4	3
H. Cigarette smoking is harmful only if a person inhales.	5	4	3
I. Even if cigarettes don't kill you, they can cut down on what you might get out of life.	5	4	3
J. I prefer the company of girls who don't smoke.	5	4	3
K. People who smoke seem to be more at ease with others.	5	4	3
L. There is no danger in smoking cigars or pipes.	5	4	3
M. I believe the health information about smoking is true.	5	4	3
N. Cigarette smoking should be forbidden inside public places.	5	4	3
O. Smoking cigarettes gives you a good feeling.	5	4	3
P. Cigarettes low in tar and nicotine can't harm your health.	5	4	3
Q. There's nothing wrong with smoking cigarettes as long as you don't smoke too many.	1	2	3
R. If I smoke around other people, I take away their right to breathe clean air.	5	4	3
S. Smoking cigarettes seems to make good times even better.	5	4	3
T. Teenagers who smoke regularly can quit for good any time they like.	5	4	3

DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
2	1
2	1
2	1
2	1
2	1
2	1
2	1
2	1
2	1
2	1
2	1
2	1
2	1
2	1
2	1
2	1
4	5
2	1
2	1
2	1

how to score:

1.
Copy in the spaces below the numbers you have circled next to each statement, putting the number you have circled next to Statement A over line A, to Statement B over line B, etc.

2.
Add the scores down each column to get your totals. For example, the sum of your scores A, E, I, etc., gives you your score for that column, etc.

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H
I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P
Q	R	S	T
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE
A. Most boys *start* smoking cigarettes because most of their friends smoke.	5	4	3
B. Teenagers who smoke cigarettes are more likely to be troublemakers than those who don't.	5	4	3
C. I feel good knowing I can turn to my parents for advice.	5	4	3
D. Making something of my life is important to me.	5	4	3
E. Most girls *start* smoking cigarettes to try to attract boys.	5	4	3
F. A person who smokes is more of a follower than one who doesn't smoke.	5	4	3
G. Adults try to stop teenagers from smoking just to show their power.	1	2	3
H. I use my own set of values to decide what I will or will not do.	5	4	3
I. Most boys *start* smoking cigarettes to try to become more popular.	5	4	3
J. Kids who smoke are show-offs.	5	4	3
K. It annoys me that my parents have so much control over things I want to do.	1	2	3
L. I don't want to get hooked on anything, including cigarettes.	5	4	3
M. If you don't smoke cigarettes, other teenagers put you down.	5	4	3
N. Teenage smokers think they are grown-up, but they really aren't.	5	4	3
O. I wish I were older than I am now.	1	2	3
P. I can control the kind of person I will become.	5	4	3
Q. I am under pressure from my friends to smoke.	5	4	3
R. Teenage smokers think they look cool, but they don't really.	5	4	3
S. A teenager should be able to do the things he wants to do when he wants to do them.	1	2	3
T. I do not want to be just one of the crowd.	5	4	3

how to score:

1.
Copy in the spaces below the numbers you have circled next to each statement, putting the number you have circled next to Statement A over line A, to Statement B over line B, etc.

2.
Add the scores down each column to get your totals. For example, the sum of your scores A, E, I, etc., gives you your score for that column, etc.

A	B	C	D
E	F	G	H
I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P
Q	R	S	T
(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)

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Compare your scores with the scores of other teenagers.

Here's how:

1. Copy each of your eight scores in the spaces below each of the lines, as indicated.
2. On the chart, make an X at the appropriate place above for each of your scores. For example, if your score is 15, your X will be exactly half way between the top and the bottom. When you finish, you will have eight X marks.
3. Draw a line to connect the X's.
4. Now compare your score for each set of statements with the score of the other teenagers nationwide. Remember, in making these comparisons, that a high score is not "better" than a low score, as it usually is on tests. The purpose of comparing scores with those of other teenagers is to help you see how you stand on these smoking issues in relation to other teenagers. On the accompanying chart, a line has been drawn to connect the points where each average score falls. If your X on any score is above this point, you are more in agreement with this concept than the average teenager. If it is below, you are less in agreement. On those scores where the average is very high (e.g., Scores 1 and 8) you may be below average but still basically in agreement.

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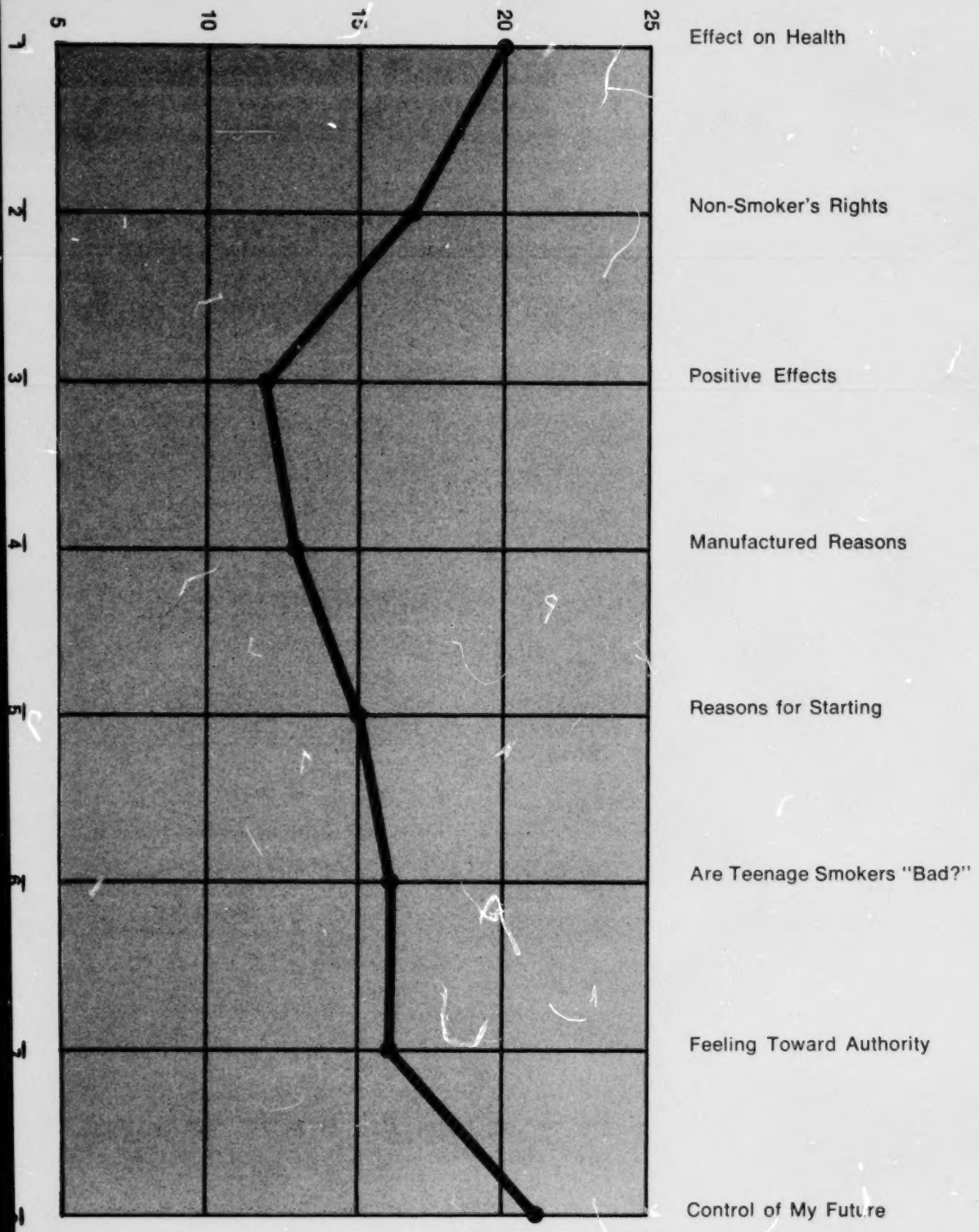
5
10
15
20
25
Effect on Health
Non-Smoker's Rights
Positive Effects
Manufactured Reasons
Reasons for Starting
Are Teenage Smokers "Bad?"
Feeling Toward Authority
Control of My Future

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Score 1.
effect of smoking on health

Scores on this set of statements tell how much a person knows about the effects of cigarette smoking on health and how much he believes of what he has learned. The average teenager has a score of 20, which indicates a very high level of acceptance of the health hazards of smoking. If your score is 20 or above, you have learned about the harmful effects of smoking and are concerned about them. A score between 15 and 20 shows concern about the health hazards, but slightly less than the average teenager. Only those with a score less than 15 are not very concerned about it. Either they do not know as much about the health hazards of smoking, or have not really thought about it enough to have formed a strong opinion.

Score 2.
non-smoker's rights

While the score on the statements on Score 1 gives an indication of the effect on the individual, Score 2 deals with the extent to which smoking has an effect on other people. There is a growing feeling that people who do not smoke have the right to breathe clean air that is not polluted with cigarette smoke. Many teenagers agree with this feeling as it is expressed in the statements that go to make up Score 2. The average teenager has a score of 17. A very high score, of 20 or more, is made by a person who is very sensitive to how other people might feel about breathing cigarette smoke. A person who makes such a score would rather not be around smokers, and would like to see smokers kept apart from others in public places. If below 10, the respondent does not feel that cigarette smoke bothers non-smokers. Teenagers who do not smoke have an average score of 19, while those who do show less concern for the rights of others with an average score of 14.

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Score 3. positive effects of smoking

While Scores 1 and 2 reflect feelings about the negative effects of smoking, Score 3 looks at the positive effects. Although most teenagers see smoking as very costly in terms of the effects on the individual's health as well as the comfort of others, they also feel that people would not smoke cigarettes if they did not get something out of it. If your score is 20 or above, you believe that people are benefiting a great deal from smoking. The average teenager, with a score of 12, does not see cigarettes as contributing much to a person's enjoyment of life. If your score is 10 or below, you do not see cigarette smoking as having very many positive aspects. There is not as much difference between smokers and non-smokers as might be expected. Smokers have an average score of 14 compared with an average score of 11 for non-smokers.

Score 4. manufactured reasons for smoking

Most teenagers, although they believe that smoking is harmful to health, can find reasons for ignoring this fact. They try to make up reasons for overlooking the dangers of smoking, or pretend there are circumstances where there are no dangers in smoking. While they may accept the disadvantages to the individual smoker and to those around him, and may feel that there are few advantages to smoke, some will still try to find reasons to explain why smoking is all right. A high score, 20 or above, says "It can't happen to me," or "Here are the reasons it's all right for me to smoke now." Whereas a low score, 10 or below, indicates that the respondent is not trying to pretend to himself that it's all right to smoke. The average score of all teenagers is only 13, indicating that most teenagers do not try to explain away the disadvantages of smoking. This is true for smokers and non-smokers alike!

In understanding your scores on these four sets of statements, it is helpful to look at them as they relate to each other. If Scores 1 and 2 are high and Scores 3 and 4 are low, you feel that there are many disadvantages to smoking and few advantages. In addition, you have not tried to persuade yourself that it is all right to smoke anyway. This pattern of scores usually is accompanied by a decision not to smoke. Some teenagers, however, while they see more disadvantages than advantages in smoking will still decide to smoke. These teenagers will feel a need to rationalize this decision. They will have high scores on 1 and 2, a low score on 3, and a high score on 4. Those who have low scores on 1 and 2 and a high score on 3 believe that smoking has few disadvantages and can give a lot of pleasure. They think that they have a lot to gain and not much to lose by smoking. They are in danger of becoming smokers, if they have not already done so. High scores on Score 1, Score 2, and Score 3 indicate conflict. People with this pattern see both advantages and disadvantages in smoking. If your scores follow this pattern, you must decide whether the risks to you and the discomfort of those around you are worth the benefits you get from smoking.

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Score 5.
reasons for starting

The set of statements that make up Score 5 form a picture of the teenage smoker as other teenagers see him. Whatever reasons teenagers actually have for starting to smoke, this score shows why you *think* teenagers start to smoke. Perhaps their opinions on why they start to smoke is affected by what they see in advertisements, which show the smoker as popular, attractive to the opposite sex, and, in general, completely accepted by others in his age group. If your score is very high, 20 or above, you think that this is the true picture of the teenage smoker, and that reasons for starting are to enhance social life. The average teenager has a score of 15. Smokers are less likely than non-smokers to believe that these are the reasons teenagers start to smoke. The average score of smokers is 13 compared with an average score of 16 for non-smokers.

Score 6.
are teenage smokers "bad?"

While Score 5 describes the way teenagers see the taking up of smoking, Score 6 shows a picture of the teenager smoker. This score is based on a group of statements that are very critical of the teenage smoker. A high score (20 or higher) shows agreement with the idea that smokers are show-offs, troublemakers, are trying to look grown-up, etc. He has very little liking or respect for the smoker, even though he may be one himself. A person who has a very low score (10 or below) does not believe these negative statements about the smokers, or else he refuses to believe them because he doesn't want to think he is this kind of person. The average teenager has a score of 16, with smokers having a lower score than non-smokers, as would be expected. Smokers, with an average score of 13, show that they do not believe that the teenage smoker is "bad." Non-smokers have an average score of 18, showing that they are much more likely to have a negative image of the smoker.

Score 7.
feeling toward authority

The statements that make up this score deal with how teenagers feel about parents and other people who have authority over them. Score 7 indicates how the individual feels about satisfying his own needs and at the same time meeting the demands imposed upon him by those in authority. The higher the score on this set, the more the teenager likes to turn to his parents for advice and support. Those with low scores want more independence, and very low scores show that the teenager is rebelling against authority. A very high score is 20 and above, and a very low score is 10 or below. Those in the middle express a desire for independence, while realizing that adults are often helpful to them. The average score is 16, with smokers scoring slightly lower and non-smokers scoring slightly higher.

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Score 8.
can I control my future?

Although most teenagers want to decide the kind of person they will become, and believe that they *can* become the kind of person they want to be, some feel this more strongly than others. A high score (22 or more) is an expression of importance to the individual of controlling his own destiny as opposed to being subject to the chances of good or bad luck, or being subject to control by others. It also shows a belief in the ability to exercise this control. The average teenager has a very high score, 21, on this set of statements. There is little difference between smokers and non-smokers.

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here are some opinions of teenagers

- Do you feel that cigarettes are a form of air pollution?
  If you do, 77% of the teenagers agree with you.
- Does it bother you that many adults cannot stop smoking?
  Well, it bothers a lot of teenagers—56% of them.
- Are cigarettes low in tar and nicotine safe?
  72% of all teenagers disagree.
- Do you believe as a teenager that it is more important to go along with the crowd than be different?
  Well, 56% of teenagers disagree with that.
- Do large numbers of teenagers prefer the company of boys who smoke?
  No, 47% do not.
- Do you believe that even though lung cancer and heart disease can be caused by other things, cigarette smoking can still make a real difference?
  78% of teenagers think that it does.
- Do you believe that smoking cannot harm the health of teenagers?
  87% of teenagers believe it can. Even 77% of teenage smokers believe it can.
- Do you believe cigarette smoke smells bad?
  69% of teenagers think so.

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here are some opinions of teenagers who smoke

- Do you think that teenagers who smoke cigarettes regularly can quit any time they like?
  Well, 57% of those who do smoke regularly say that's not so.
- Do you think smoking cigarettes is a smart thing to do?
  Well, 30% of teenagers who do smoke call it a stupid thing to do.
- Is it better not to start smoking than to have to quit?
  Even 77% of the teenagers who smoke feel that way.
- Do you believe that students who smoke cigarettes tend to be more popular?
  Half of those who do smoke do not think so.
- Do you think cigarette smoking makes a teenager feel grown-up?
  Well, 72% of the smokers don't agree that it does.
- Do people smoke cigarettes to think more clearly?
  Well, even 54% of teenagers who smoke do not think so.
- Do you think cigarette smoking can harm you even after only a year?
  Even 53% of the teenagers who smoke believe this to be so.
- Do you believe the health information about cigarette smoking is true?
  So do two-thirds of the teenagers who smoke.
- If you have children, do you hope they never smoke?
  Even half of the smokers hope their children won't smoke.
- Do you think cigarette smoking slows you down in sports?
  69% of the teenagers who smoke say that it does.
- Do teenage smokers think smoking cigarettes is a good habit?
  No, 68% of them say it is a bad habit.
- Do you think people can quit smoking very easily?
  Well, 84% of teenagers who smoke say it is habit forming.
- Do teenage smokers find that smoking cigarettes can help them enjoy life more?
  Well, 46% of them say it doesn't.

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